



GRAIN FOODS FOUNDATION

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490 Bear Cub Drive
Ridgway, CO 81432
Telephone: 970-626-5183
Fax: 970-626-5814

January 21, 2009

2010 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee
C/O Carole Davis, Co-Executive Secretary
Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
United States Department of Agriculture
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1034
Alexandria, VA 22302

Dear Chairman Van Horn and Advisory Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The Grain Foods Foundation is a non-profit, nutrition education association dedicated to educating consumers about the importance of grain foods in a healthful diet. Our members include bakers, millers, and allied companies of the baking industry.

We realize that some members of the committee are very knowledgeable about all types of grains. However, we would like to emphasize that while we support increased consumption of whole grains, we ask that the committee not disregard the importance of enriched, fortified grains in the American diet.

Science shows that three servings of whole grains each day can promote better health by possibly reducing the risk of cancer, heart disease, diabetes and obesity. *However science has not proven that "more is better"* – we just assume it is.

Enriched, fortified grains also provide health benefits. As you know, in 1998 the FDA mandated that folic acid be added to enriched grains in twice the amount contained in whole grains. Since that time, CDC estimates that 1,000 babies **per year or 26 percent** (1) have been saved from disabling and potentially fatal neural tube birth defects. The March of Dimes encourages women of child-bearing age to eat grain products enriched with folic acid because the majority of them do not take supplements, despite nearly 17 years of advice from the U.S. Public Health Service and international health organizations to do so (2).

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Judi Adams, President
Judi.Adams@grainsfoundation.org

The January 9, 2009 issue of *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly* (3) from CDC also supports consumption of enriched grains: “Health-care professionals should encourage women who can become pregnant to consume folic acid daily through a vitamin supplement or enriched foods.” Enriched, fortified grains are a primary source of folic acid in the American diet.

Furthermore, the U.S. has a growing Hispanic population and it is even more important that this group of women consume adequate amounts of folic acid-rich foods as they are 1.5 to 3 times more likely to have a baby with a neural tube birth defect (4).

In addition to reducing the incidence of neural tube birth defects, iron-deficiency-anemia and *perhaps* lowering the incidence of death from heart disease and strokes, enriched and fortified grains virtually eliminated beriberi and pellagra in the U.S.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2010 guidelines. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judi Adams". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judi Adams, MS, RD
President

References:

- 1) CDC. *Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report*. May 7, 2004. 53 (17): 363-365.
- 2) Botto LD, Lisi A, Robert-Gnansia E, Erickson JD, Vollset SE, Mastroiacovo P, Botting B, Cocchi G, de Vigan C, de Walle H, Feijoo M, Igens LM, McDonnell B, Scarano G, Siffel C, Metneki J, Stoll C, Smithells R and Goujard J. *International retrospective cohort study of neural tube defects in relation to folic acid recommendations: are the recommendations working?* BMJ 2005; 330:571
- 3) CDC. *Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report*. Jan. 9 2009. 57 (53): 1409.
- 4) www.CDC.gov/omh/populations/HL/HHP/folic.htm